Lessons from Mozilla

NASA NHHPC Workshop

Jan 19th 2011, Houston TX

7 insights, 2 problems & some thoughts

mozilla

Pascal

Experiment

mozilla

Warning:

Your milage may vary

mozilla

First, some context

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Mozilla is...

1. a global, open source project

2. a community of thousands of creators

3. a mission-oriented organization

4. a public benefit company and subs

5. the maker of Firefox & Thunderbird

In other words...

Most popular search engine?!

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But then...

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Mozilla's Mission:

To promote choice and innovation on the Internet

mozilla®

seriously.

that’s it.

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The Web is too important

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about:Mozilla

- Mozilla project started in 1998 within Netscape
- Mozilla Foundation started in 2003
- approximately 350 paid staff in 20 countries
- 40% of code contributed by volunteers
- testing community of 20,000+
- current reach is more than 400 million users
- global browser market share >25%

Now...

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7 insights, 2 problems & some thoughts

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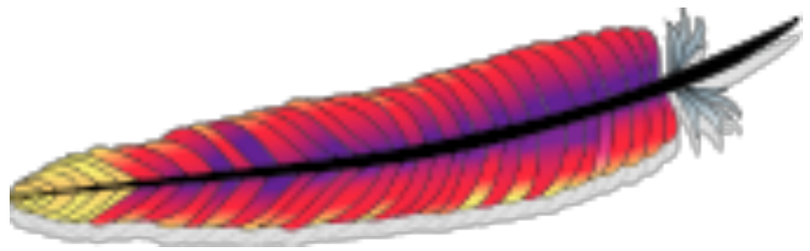
Insight #1

Superior Products Matter

Look at some big successes...



All are known for being best-in-class for users

Without excellent experience & utility, the rest is meaningless

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Insight #2

Push (most) decision-making to the edges

The Strongest Open Systems are Chaords

1. distributed decision-making
2. nodal authority
3. ways to route around

http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/en/d/d2/Internet_map_1024.jpg

Characteristics of Chaords (coined by Dee Hock)

1. exhibit characteristics of both chaos & order
2. regularly yield surprising innovation
3. highly robust & scalable systems

Examples: the Internet, Visa, Wikipedia

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Mozilla is a Chaord

1. high agreement on core values
2. decision-making rests with module owners
3. groups have distinct ways of working
4. many decision-makers outside the “official” org
5. communication is central

Insight #3

Communication will happen in every possible way (so make sure it’s reusable)

People will communicate in every useful way possible

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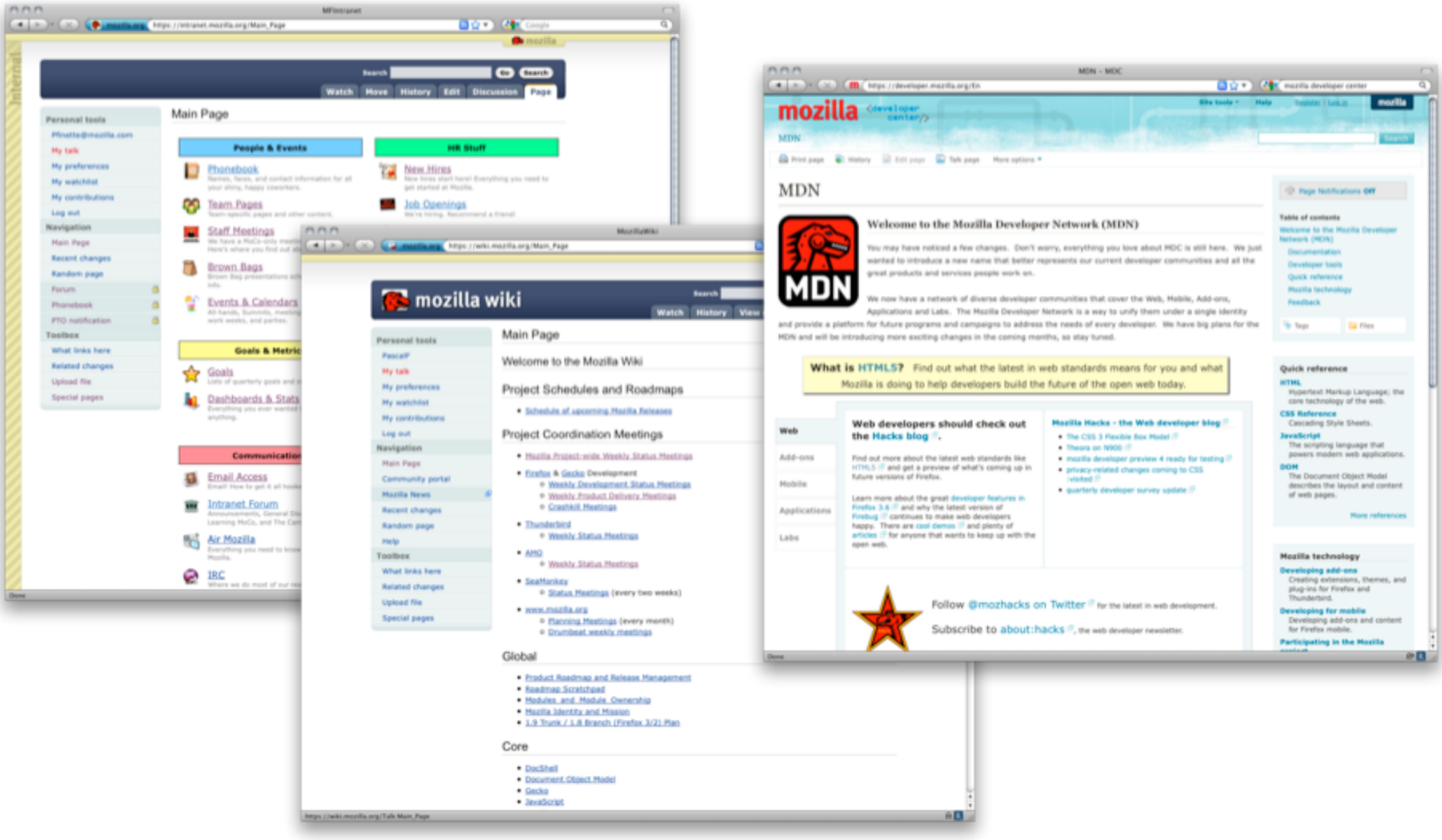
Wikis



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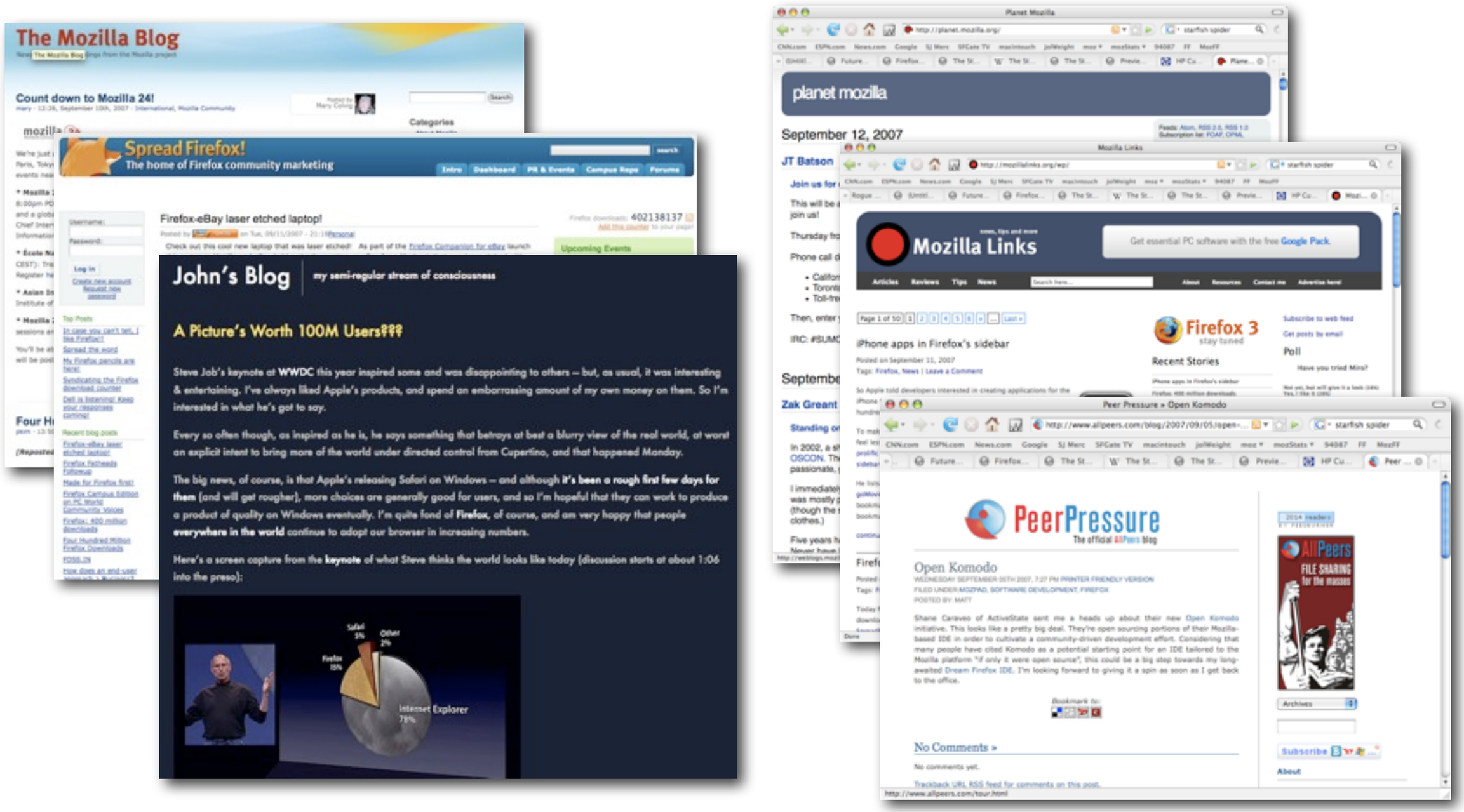
Blogs (and especially, Other Peoples' Blogs!)



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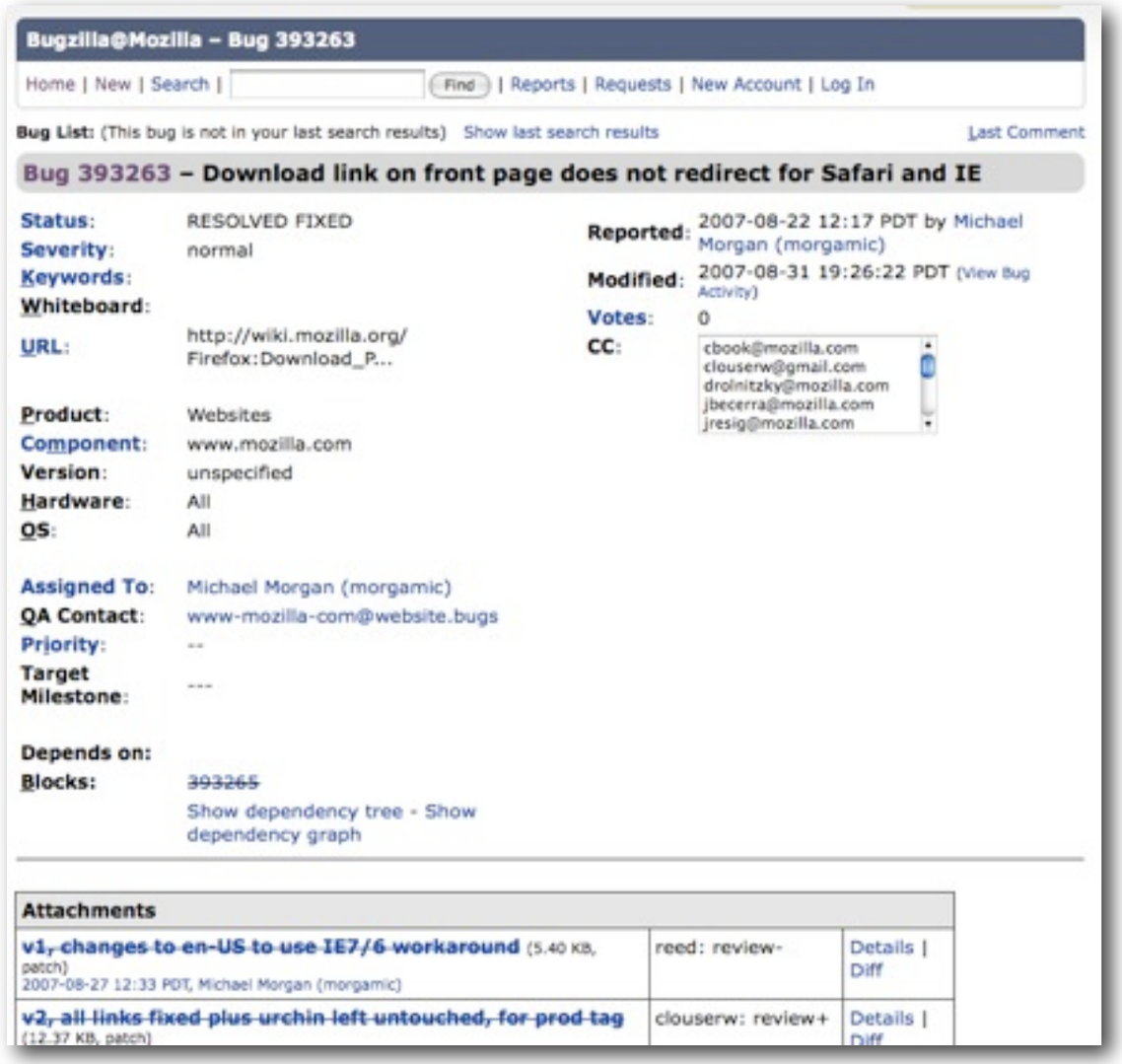
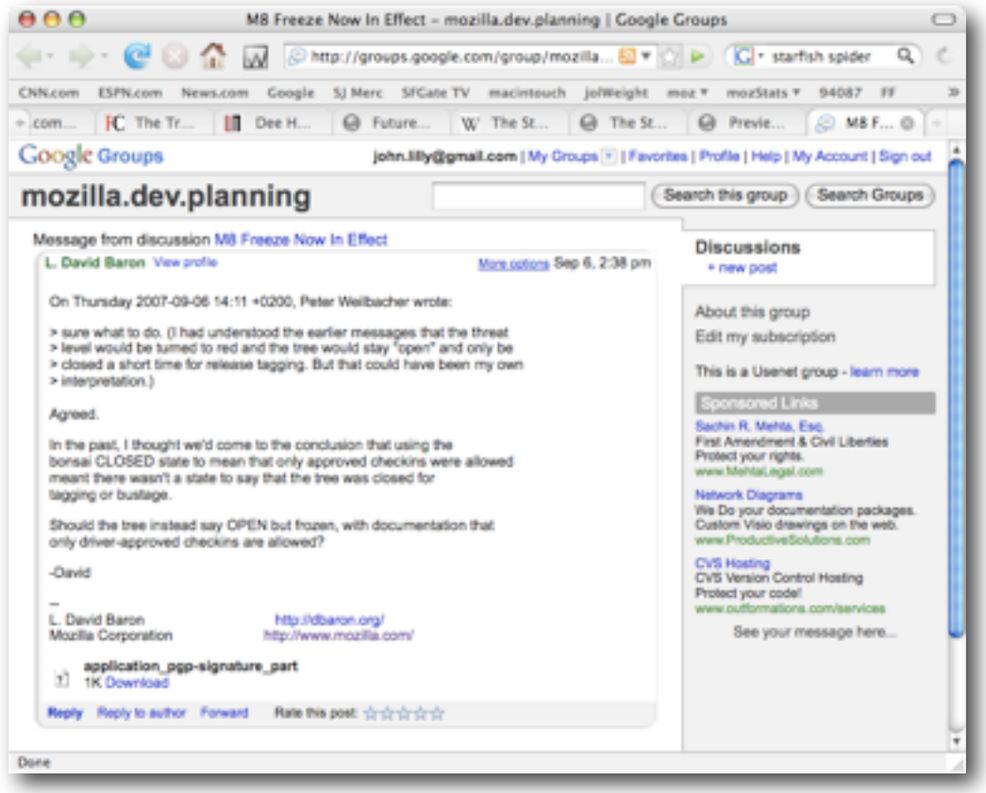
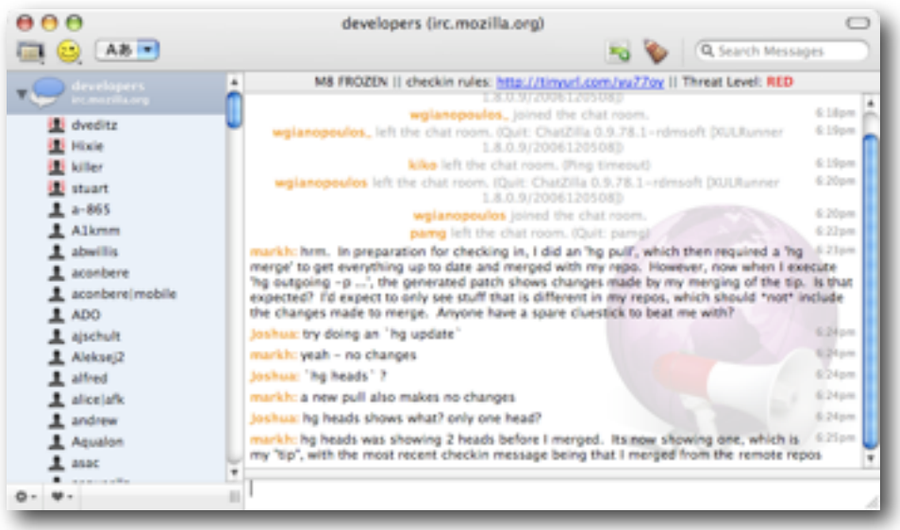
Our main channels: Bugzilla, IRC & newsgroups







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Increasing: video, audio & chat

And very frequent real-life get-togethers

Key: Make every conversation (re)usable by as many people as possible

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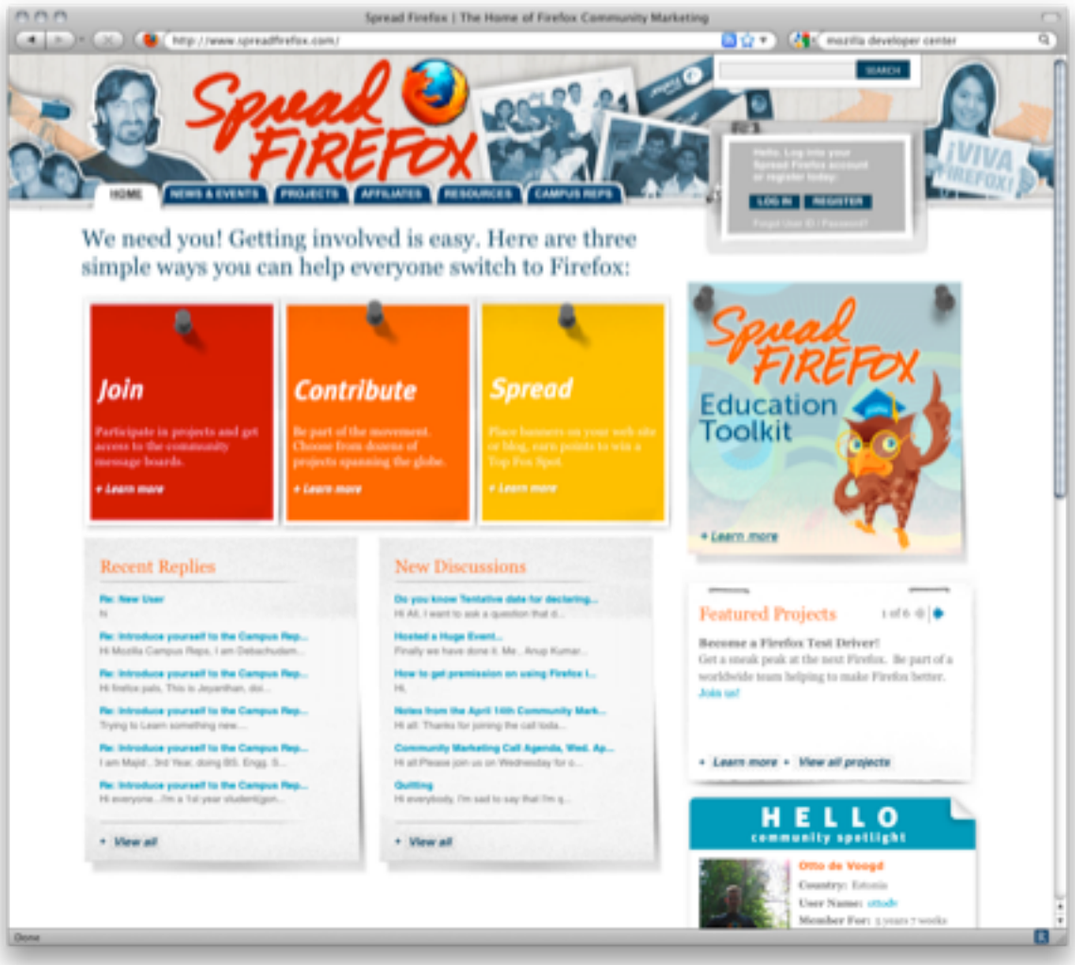
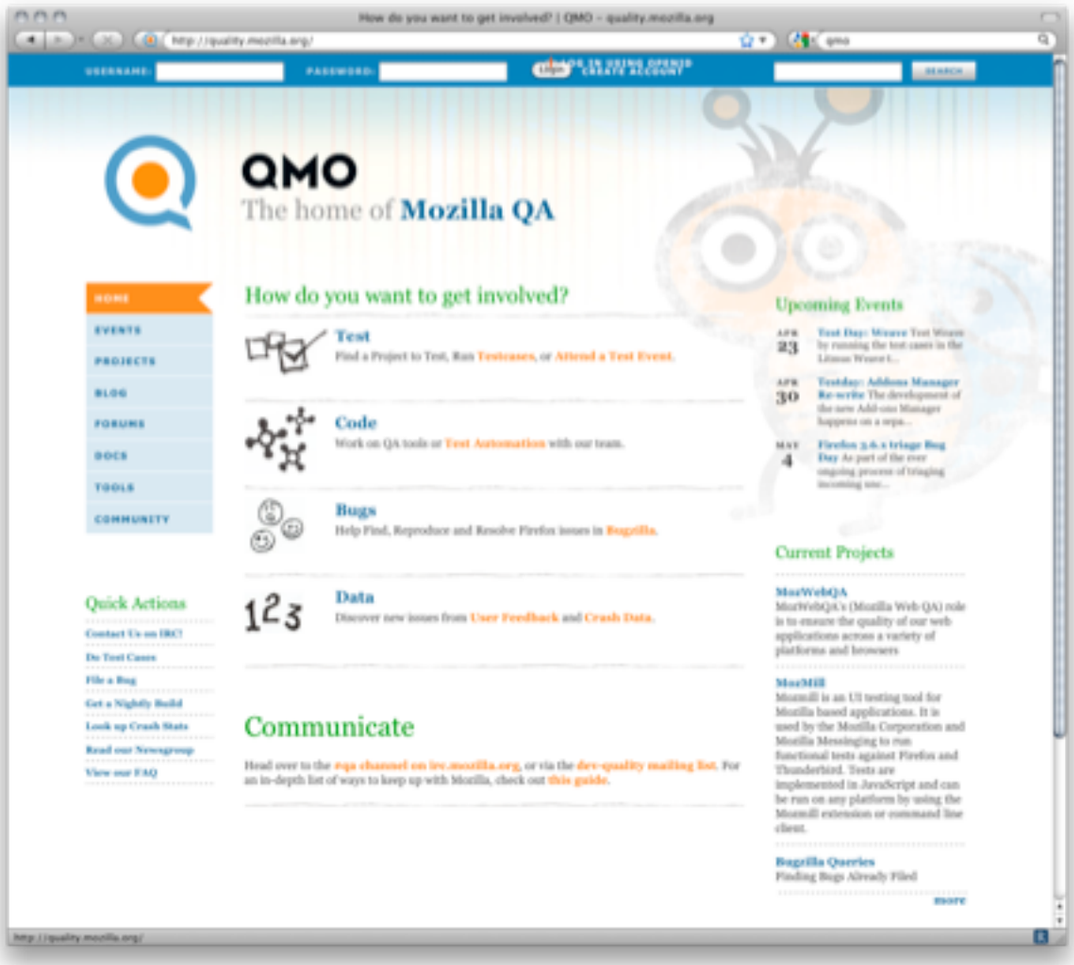
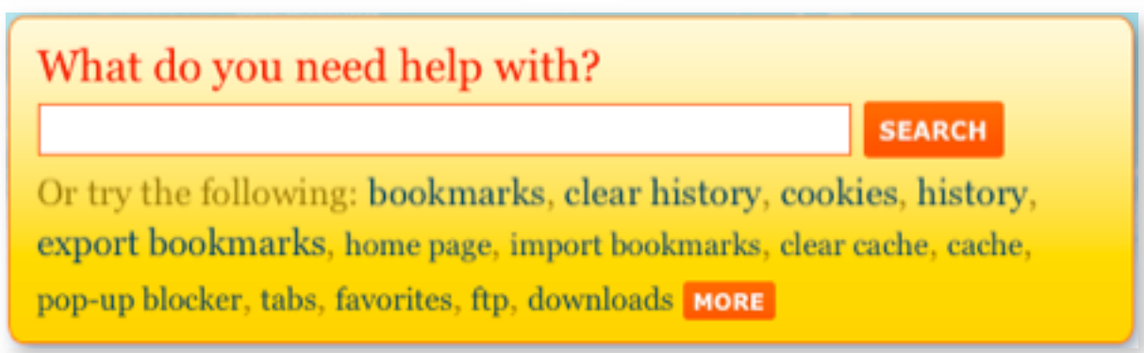
Insight #4

Make it easy for your community to do the important things

SuMo, QMO, SFx







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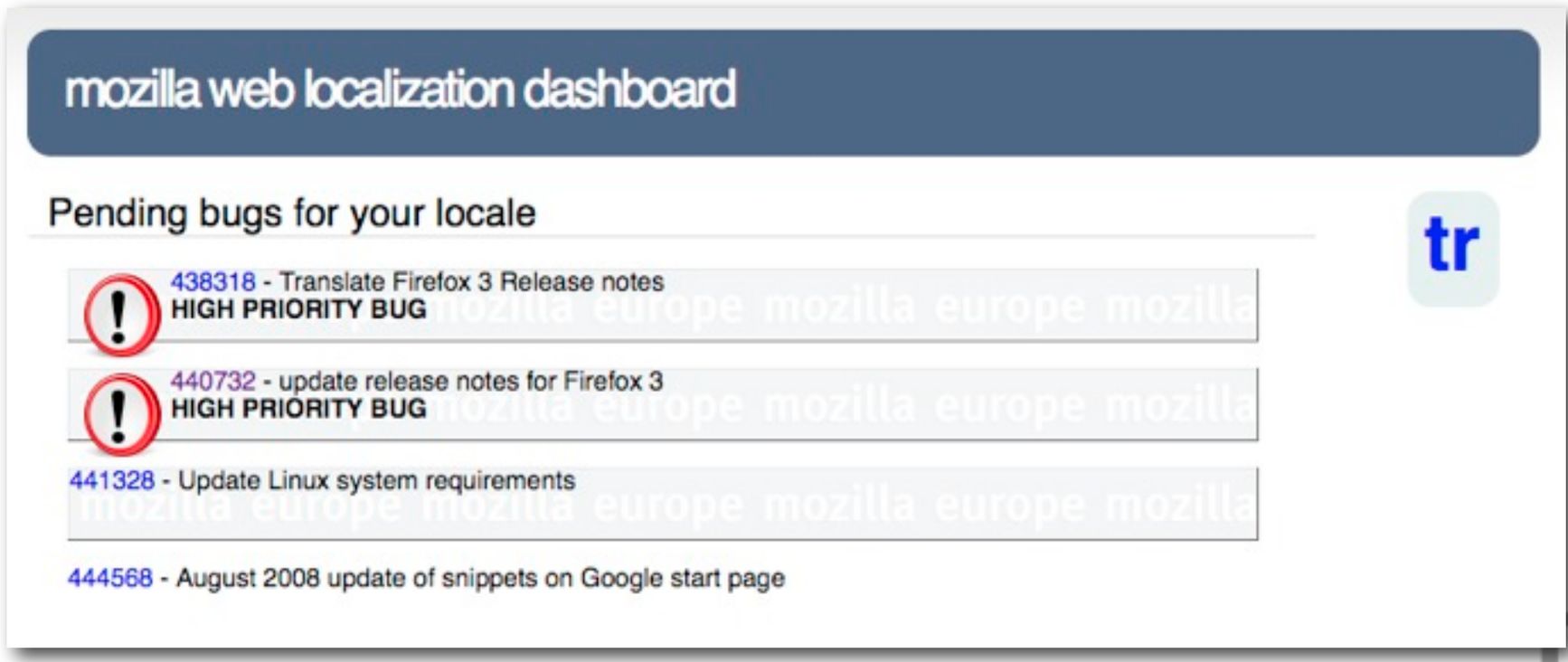
Localization

Firefox ships in 80 languages;
79 of them localized by volunteers

Making it easy is a huge priority



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Our focus now (increasingly) is on making it easier to help others do more

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Insight #5

Surprise is overrated

Surprise is the opposite of engagement

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Goal is to increase the inner circle of participation

Surprising to some...

Goal is to have growing inner circle – ideally everyone should feel included

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Insight #6

Communities are not markets: members are citizens

Citizens are more than consumers,

are more than bystanders,

are more than stakeholders

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They are us.

We are them.

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The best citizens challenge the status quo, propose improvements and make the conversation richer

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They don’t just make products better

They make them what they are

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Insight #7 (meta-insight)

The key is the art of figuring out whether & how to apply each of these ideas

The 7 Lessons

1. Superior Products Matter
2. Push (most) decision-making to the edges
3. Communication will happen - make it reusable
4. Make it easy to do the important things
5. Surprise is overrated
6. Communities are not markets
7. Figure out whether & how to apply these ideas

Experiment! Try things!

Measure where possible

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There are real problems, of course

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Problem #1

Engaged citizens are noisy

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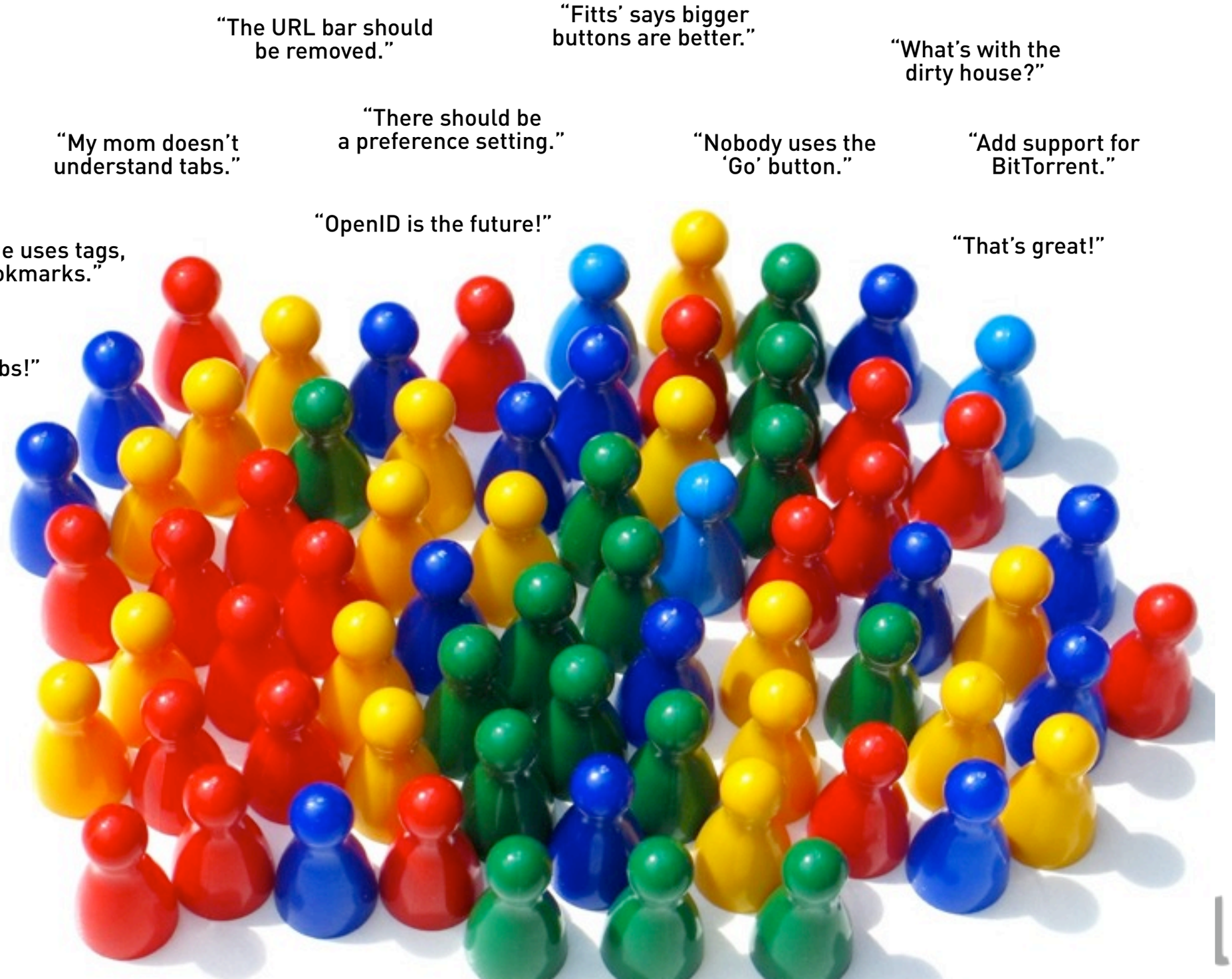
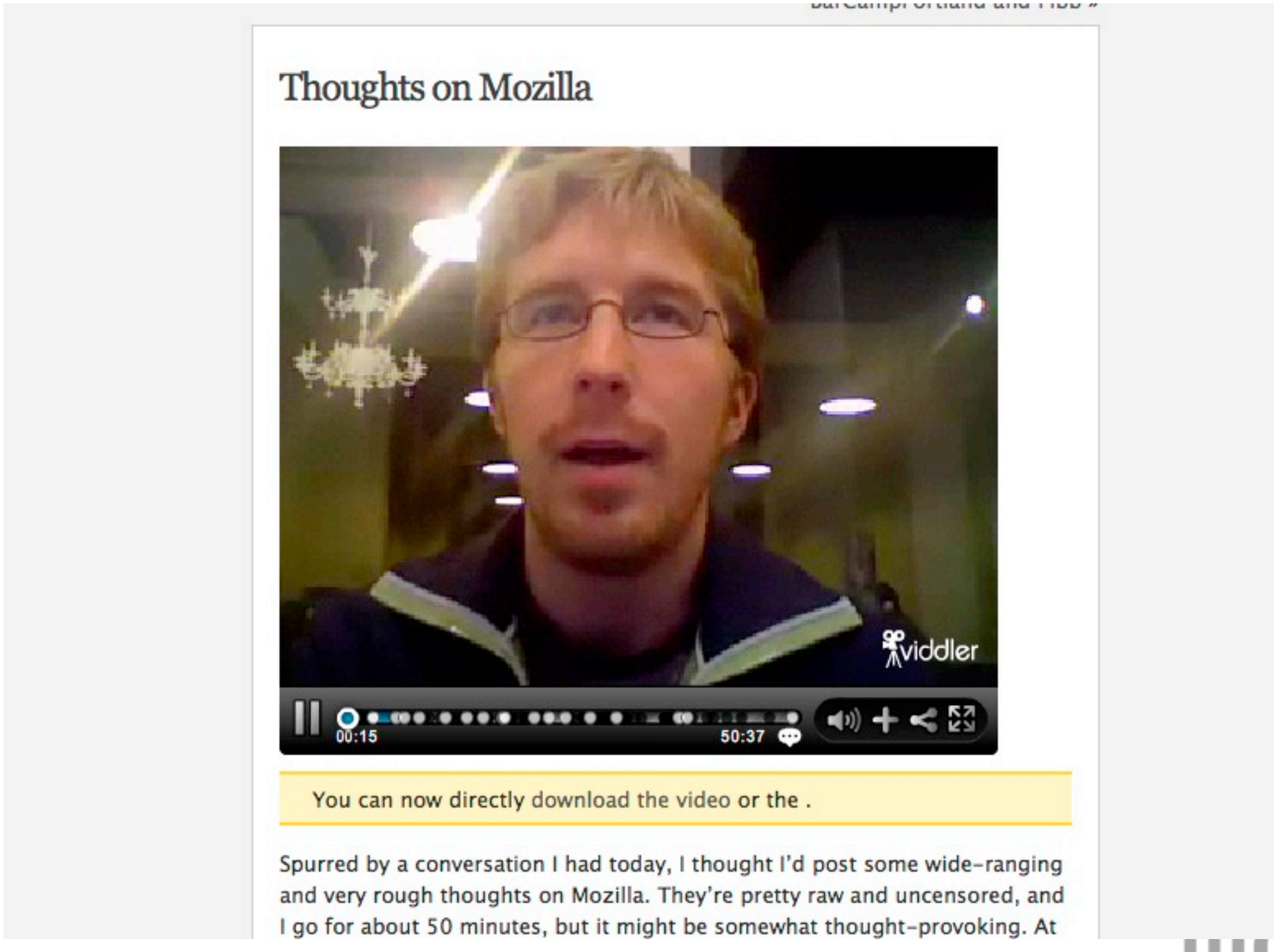
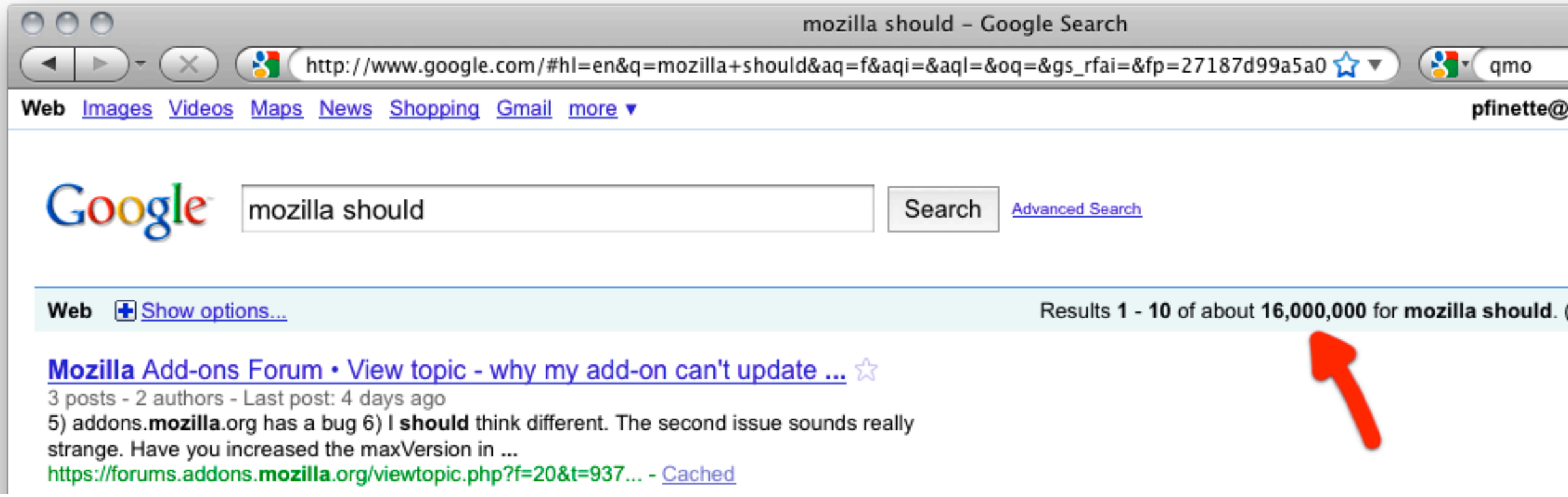
Citizens are noisy...



...and demanding...



...and contradictory...



...and vital.

They help products & technology & organizations make hard decisions in the right way.

Problem #2

At scale, there are no maps

Actually, there are maps...

But they're everybody else's maps,

and not really yours

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Dragons everywhere...

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Carta_Marina

Key is defining what you care about,

how to measure it and

how to communicate litmus tests

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Postscript

Some thoughts about the future

or:

Stuff which keeps me up at night

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Thought #1

Keeping things open

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ROGERS 3G
4:20 PM
Tuesday
9
Firefox Home
Calendar
Photos
Camera
YouTube
Stocks
280
Maps
73°
Weather
Clock
Calculator
Notes
Settings
iTunes
App Store
Phone
Mail
Safari
iPod

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VS

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(Adam Smith)

Thought #2

Evolving with the Web

(The Web beyond the Browser)

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Get Local

Weekly Picks

Search Options

Yellow Pages - People Search - City Maps -- Stock Quotes - Sports Scores

- **Arts and Humanities** - Architecture, Photography, Literature...
- **Business and Economy [Xtra!]** - Companies, Investments, Classifieds...
- **Computers and Internet [Xtra!]** - Internet, WWW, Software, Multimedia...
- **Education** - Universities, K-12, College Entrance...
- **Entertainment [Xtra!]** - Cool Links, Movies, Music, Humor...
- **Government** - 96 Elections, Politics **[Xtra!]**, Agencies, Law, Military...
- **Health [Xtra!]** - Medicine, Drugs, Diseases, Fitness...
- **News and Media [Xtra!]** - Current Events, Magazines, TV, Newspapers...

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Astronomy and Astrophysics -- Biology -- Chemistry -- Earth Sciences -- Mathematics -- Philosophy -- Physics -- Science -- Statistics

Social Sciences

Anomalous Phenomena -- Anthropology -- Archaeology -- Countries of the world -- Economics -- Geography -- History -- History of Science and Technology -- Language -- Linguistics -- Politics -- Psychology -- Sociology

Applied Arts and Sciences

Agriculture -- Architecture -- Business and Industry -- Communication -- Computing -- Education -- Engineering -- Family and Consumer Science -- Health Sciences -- Law -- Library and Information Science -- Public Affairs -- Technology -- Transport

Culture

Classics -- Critical Theory -- Dance -- Entertainment -- Film -- Games -- Hobbies -- Literature -- Music -- Opera --

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kiko
Trumba
eskobo
mayomi
Pageflakes
vimeo
HipCal
Google talk
skobsie
shadows
groovee
YouTube
Zimbra
LookSmart FURL Your Personal Web File
smugmug
newsgator
skype
wallop
600 Todo
Blogniscient
TiNFiNGER
shutterfly
meefeed
PodDater
Feedster
favoor
Planzo.com
ups
gliffy
ZAZZLE
Tailrank
TagWorld
nuvvo
dogear
yakalike
grouper
ODDPOST
QOOP
iNods
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BR BETA
blish
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Renkoo
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gather
Agatra
browsr
oyogi
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ZOHO Creator
bitty
PEPSI
QUAKR
zopa
Jotspot
Frappr!
jeteye
dabble
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SHOUTWIRE
iKarma
AirSet
IBM
tech.memeorandum
CalendarHub
Windows Live
kajeet
Suprglu
PIECING YOUR WEB TOGETHER
pando
zigtag
Findory
backfence
clipmarks
wayfaring
gOFFICE
Squeet
MINT
zipingo
AllPeers
orb
Rallypoint
Zoozio
blogbeat
Ziggs
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dPolls
flickr
Ning
Ookles
Strongspace
zoominfo
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Spot Runner
myspace
NewsAlloy
Allmydata.com
blo.gs
EchoSign
gabbr.com
Gcast
blinkx
openomy
riffs
ajchat
XmailHardDrive
LinkedIn
chatsum
PANDORA
looklater
jambo
PROTOPAGE
ROLLYO
ClipShack
30DAYTAGS
fresh tags. free delivery.
Feed Butler
WebJay
PLAZES
Noodly
wyndir
diigo
box
Jots
Xdrive
RawSugar
JOHN DEERE
jetBlue
vizu beta
digg
del.icio.us
omni drive
AlmondRocks
Tagyu
writely
Simpy
Gtalkr
moo flex
eBay
Clusty
TRUVEO
egoSurf
Quimble
pegasus
remember the milk
SQUIDOO
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1,968,314 articles in English

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- Society
- Biography
- Mathematics
- Technology
- Geography
- Science
- **All portals**

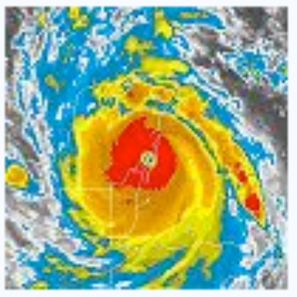
Overview · Editing · Questions · Help

Contents · Categories · Featured content · A–Z index

Today's featured article

Jake Gyllenhaal is an Academy Award-nominated and BAFTA Award-winning American actor. The son of director Stephen Gyllenhaal and screenwriter Naomi Foner, Gyllenhaal began acting at age eleven, and his career has seen performances in diverse roles. Gyllenhaal's first major film appearance was in 2001's cult hit

In the news



- The Space Shuttle Orbiter *Endeavour* safely returns from a **mission** to expand the International Space Station.
- Tropical cyclones: **Hurricane Dean** (pictured) passes south of Jamaica

Done

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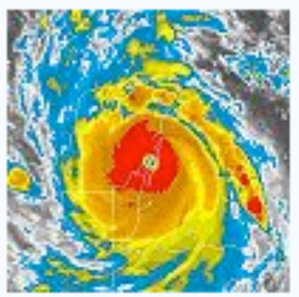

- The Space Shuttle Orbiter *Endeavour* safely returns from a **mission** to expand the International Space Station.
- Tropical cyclones: **Hurricane Dean**

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Thought #3

And more themes emerge...

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You & Your Friends

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Do it for Me

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The Data Economy

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